

Message Text

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ACTION COA-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 OES-02 CG-00 COME-00 DODE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6141

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCLR TPHY BF

SUBJ: R/V EASTWARD

REF: (A) STATE 231040

(B) SALISBURY-HIGH TELCONS 11/1/74 AND 11/4/74

(C) SALISBURY-LEROY TELCONS 11/1/74, 11/4/74, AND 11/5/74

SUMMARY: CURRENT STATUS OF SUBJECT RESEARCH PROJECT IS THAT PERMISSION BY GCOB HAS BEEN "REVOKED", THAT REINSTATEMENT OF THAT PERMISSION IS CONTINGENT ON GCOB FISHERIES OFFICER'S DECISION TO ONCE AGAIN JOIN PROJECT AS OBSERVER, THAT GCOB MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS IS NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT HIS DOING SO, AND THAT IF DUKE UNIVERSITY GOES AHEAD WITH SHELF RESEARCH ABSENT PERMISSION, IT MAY FIND ITSELF IN REAL DIFFICULTIES WITH GCOB. FOLLOWING OUTLINES EVENTS THUS FAR IN WHAT HAS BEEN A TANGLED AND RATHER UNFORTUNATE EPISODE.

1. REF A, RECEIVED BY EMBASSY OCTOBER 21, REQUESTED GCOB PERMISSION FOR CRUISE, APOLOGIZING AS IN PREVIOUS INSTANCES FOR LATENESS OF REQUEST, WHICH WAS STATED TO BE DUE TO "DELAY" WITHIN DEPARTMENT." EMBASSY IMMEDIATELY DELIVERED LETTER TO BAHAMIAN MINISTRY REQUESTING PERMISSION, OUTLINING CRUISE ITINERARY AND MISSION AS SET FORTH REF A AND OFFERING SLOT FOR BAHAMIAN OBSERVER.

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2. ON NOVEMBER 1, MINEXTAFF PERMSEC RUSSELL CALLED EMBASSY, COMPLAINED OF SHORT LEAD-TIME PROVIDED, BUT SAID THAT GOCB WISHED TO PLACE CHIEF FISHERIES OFFICER BEALES ABOARD AS OBSERVER AND THAT IF THAT COULD BE ARRANGED PERMISSION WOULD BE GRANTED. WRITTEN CONFIRMATION, WHICH DID NOT MAKE EXPLICIT LINK BETWEEN PRESENCE OF BEALES AND GRANTING OF PERMISSION, FOLLOWED FROM RUSSELL.

3. RUSSELL SUGGESTED TO EMBASSY THAT, RATHER THAN HAVE EASTWARD MAKE A PORT CALL IN THE BAHAMAS TO PICK UP BEALES, GCOB HAVE BEALES FLOWN TO MIAMI TO MEET VESSEL. IN CONVERSATION WITH DEPARTMENT, EMBASSY LEARNED THAT THIS OFFER WOULD NOT BE FEASIBLE SINCE VESSEL NOW DID NOT PLAN TO CALL AT MIAMI UNTIL CONCLUSION OF VOYAGE. AS ALTERNATIVE, IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT BEALES FLY TO GRAND BAHAMA AND JOIN VESSEL THERE. DEPARTMENT, EMBASSY, AND RUSSELL ALL AGREED IT BEST TO HAVE SPONSORS OF VOYAGE, DUKE UNIVERSITY, GET DIRECTLY IN TOUCH WITH BEALES TO MAKE NECESSARY ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS. MATTER AT THAT POINT SEEMED RESOLVED.

4. AFTERNOON OF NOVEMBER 4, EMBASSY RECEIVED CALL FROM IRATE RUSSELL WHO SAID THAT BEALES, AFTER SEVERAL INCONCLUSIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH DUKE UNIVERSITY, HAD JUST RECEIVED CALL FROM NORTH CAROLINA SAYING THAT VOYAGE WOULD NOT INCLUDE WORK IN BAHAMIAN WATERS AND THAT BEALES WOULD NOT BE INCLUDED AS AN OBSERVER. AS A RESPONSE, RUSSELL ASKED THAT DUKE BE INFORMED THAT PERMISSION FOR VOYAGE HAD BEEN "REVOKED" BY GCOB AND THAT VESSEL WOULD BE APPREHENDED IF IT ENGAGED IN SHELF RESEARCH ON BAHAMIAN SHELF OR IN BAHAMIAN WATERS.

5. EMBASSY CONVERSATIONS WITH DEPARTMENT LATE NOVEMBER 4 AND EARLY NEXT MORNING REVEALED THAT DUKE HAD DECIDED NOT TO ENGAGE IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES "WITHIN BAHAMIAN THREE MILE LIMIT" AND NOT TO PICK UP BEALES BECAUSE OF "LATENESS OF GCOB NOTICE" AND BECAUSE OF EXPENSE THAT CALLING FOR BEALES WOULD ENTAIL. EMBASSY POINTED OUT THAT THREE MILE LIMIT, OR NINE MILE CFZ BEYOND THAT, WAS IRRELEVANT WHERE SHELF RESEARCH INVOLVED, THAT THIS WAS FIRST TIME GCOB HAD DESIGNATED AN OBSERVER FOR SUCH CRUISES (A PRACTICE EMBASSY HAS TRIED TO ENCOURAGE TO FOSTER BAHAMIAN INTEREST AND SYMPATHY WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MARINE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES) AND THAT BAHAMIANS NOW FELT THEY WERE BEING SLIGHTED AND TREATED WITH LESS THAN FULL HONESTY. EMBASSY EMPHASIZED THAT DUKE UNIVERSITY ACTIONS COULD HAVE AN UNFORTUNATE EFFECT NOT ONLY ON HANDLING OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH REQUESTS IN BAHAMAS BUT IN OTHER AREAS OR OUR RELATIONS AS WELL.

6. LATER, ON NOVEMBER 5, EMBASSY WAS INFORMED BY DEPARTMENT

THAT DUKE UNIVERSITY WAS NOW OFFERING TO PAY BEALES' AIR FARE TO MAIMI TO MEET VESSEL, WHICH DEPARTED NORTH CAROLINA NOVEMBER 4. DEPARTMENT, ACKNOWLEDGING THAT DUKE HAD NOT HANDLED THIS ENTIRE EPISODE WITH VERY GOOD JUDGMENT, WANTED TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THIS OFFER WOULD RESULT IN RESTORATION OF GCOB PERMISSION FOR VOYAGE.

7. EMBASSY IMMEDIATELY CALLED RUSSELL WHO WAS NOT PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED WITH DUKE'S OFFER, CHARACTERIZING IT AS "ICE CREAM" AFTER GCOB HAD BEEN "INSULTED" BY THE SUDDEN DECISION NOT TO INCLUDE BEALES AS AN OBSERVER. RUSSELL SUGGESTED THAT DUKE HAD NEVER DECIDED NOT TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH WITHIN BAHAMIAN JURISDICTION, BUT MERELY WISHED TO EXCLUDE BEALES. RUSSELL ALSO COMPLAINED AGAIN OF SHORT LEAD-TIME IN USG SEEKING PERMISSION FOR SUCH VOYAGES AND WARNED THAT "NEXT TIME" HE WOULD RETURN TARDY REQUESTS TO EMBASSY WITHOUT COMMENT AND WITHOUT GRANTING PERMISSION. HE ALSO COMPLAINED THAT NO CHART OF VESSEL'S MOVEMENTS HAD BEEN GIVEN. RUSSELL PROMISED TO CONVEY DUKE'S OFFER TO BEALES BUT SAID THAT "IF IT WERE UP TO ME" HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT SUCH A "CLUMSY" ATTEMPT TO PLACATE BOTH BEALES AND THE GCOB. RUSSELL ALSO HINGED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER ADDERLEY MIGHT EVEN INSTRUCT RUSSELL TO TURN DOWN THE OFFER ON HIS OWN.

8. RUSSELL EMPHASIZED AGAIN THAT NO PERMISSION HAS BEEN GIVEN FOR SUBJECT VOYAGE IN BAHAMAS AND THAT VESSEL WOULD BE APPREHENDED IF NECESSARY. DUKE UNIVERSITY SHOULD BE UNDER NO ILLUSION TO THE CONTRARY. DEPARTMENT WILL BE INFORMED AT ONCE WHEN FURTHER WORD IS RECEIVED FROM THE GCOB ON THIS MATTER. MEANWHILE, EMBASSY AGAIN REQUESTS THAT DEPARTMENT MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT FUTURE PERMISSION SUBMISSIONS BE TIMELY AND COMPLETE, AND THAT PRIVATE SPONSORS OF SUCH MARINE RESEARCH PROJECTS COORDINATE THEIR ACTIVITIES WITH THE DEPARTMENT.

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